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ABSTRACT

To examine the relationship between society and curriculum, three research projects are analyzed. The first project, Beauchamp and Beauchamp (1967), which attempts to answer the question of how a curriculum comes to be what it is, examined the likenesses and differences in curriculum engineering practices among selected European countries. The second project, Anyon (1981), which investigated how, given a curriculum, a society uses it, is a study of curriculum use in five U.S. elementary schools differentiated by social class. The third, Ben-Peretz and Lavi (1981), is a study of the curriculum of the Kibbutz school system, exemplifying the investigation of curriculum as viewed in an interactive relationship with society. The analysis shows that in different societies and cultures, the school curriculum serves a major function of social control which may lead to the conservation of the status quo in society. The controlling function may be more or less deliberate. For example, the Kibbutz curriculum is deliberately and explicitly intended by the community to be a tool in the conservation of the social structure of the Kibbutz. National control of curriculum engineering in Italy and France may be viewed as a deliberate attempt to guide education from the top down and ensure curricular uniformity; even in England there is evidence of national curricular control through external examinations and governmental inspectors. In the case of the curriculum in use in the elementary schools studied by Anyon, the reproductive function is more hidden and may not be deliberate. (RM)

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Curriculum Orientations: Investigating the Curriculum of Educational Systems

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Curriculum may be defined as "all the learning experiences that are planned by formal educational organizations, whether arranged within or outside those organizations" (Musgrave 1974 p. 30). According to Musgrave this definition refers to components concerned with rationality and social control. Values and norms operating in a given society may determine to a large extent the curriculum functioning in it. A number of researchers have investigated the curriculum of educational systems, using different approaches and conceptual frameworks (Beauchamp and Beauchamp 1967, Goodlad 1979, Saunders 1979, Ben-Peretz and Lavi 1981, Anyon 1981). This study is designed to analyze and compare various approaches in order to identify the nature of insights that they afford into the relationships between society and curriculum. Possible educational implications connected to the adoption of these approaches will be discussed.

Several questions can be raised in the context of the relationship between society and curriculum. The main question is how does society manage knowledge transmission? More specifically the questions are: 1) how does a curriculum come to be what it is? 2) given a curriculum how does a society use it? 3) what does the curriculum do to those exposed to it? Musgrave (1974) suggests that these questions can be categorized as follows: - questions stemming from a perception of the curriculum as a dependent variable (question 1); - questions stemming from a perception of the curriculum as an intervening variable (question 2); - questions stemming from a perception of the curriculum as an independent variable (question 3). We have added a fourth possibility - questions stemming from a perception of the curriculum as viewed in an

interactive relationship with society. The relationship between society and curriculum may be viewed as a phenomenon of interaction in which it is difficult to distinguish between causes and outcomes. Curriculum is, on one hand, the product of society and, on the other hand, shapes and changes the society which produced it. A question exemplifying this perception is: in which ways does the curriculum change the norms and values which produced it? Employing these distinctions the following questions guided the analysis of research projects addressing the curriculum of educational systems:

1) how is curriculum defined by the investigator(s)? as which kind of variable is it treated?

2) what characterizes the research project being analyzed in the following areas:

   a) context of inquiry (which educational system was investigated)

   b) basic assumptions and questions guiding the research

   c) research methodology

   d) research conclusions

3) what relationships between society and curriculum does the research reveal?

Methodology

This paper focuses on the analysis of three research projects. One, the Beauchamp and Beauchamp (1967) investigation of curriculum as dependent on societal decisions, related to choice of the arena

in which curriculum planning efforts should be exerted. This study examined the likenesses and differences in curriculum engineering practices among selected European countries. It attempts, in part, to answer the question: how does a curriculum come to be what it is? The second, Anyon (1981), is a study of curriculum in use in five elementary schools in the U.S.A. differentiated by social class. It exemplifies the investigation of curriculum as an intervening variable, attempting to answer the question - given a curriculum, how does a society use it? The third, Ben-Peretz and Lavi (1981) is a study of the curriculum of the Kibbutz school system, exemplifying the investigation of curriculum as viewed in an interactive relationship with society. This study is an attempt to answer the questions: what are the characteristics of the interaction between the curriculum produced by the Kibbutz, stemming from its ideology, and the society which it is supposed to serve? how is the curriculum shaped by society and how does the curriculum, in turn, lead to changes and transformations in the society?

The research projects examined in this paper relate to different cultures and different levels of social structure. The Beauchamp research focused mainly on the national level of governmental institutions, in different countries in Western Europe This study investigated top down decision making influencing the curriculum. Anyon studied decision making related to the curriculum in use, at the level of the classroom, in various social class settings in one eastern state in the U.S.A. Her research aimed at disclosing patterns of distribution of knowledge at the grassroot level. Ben-Peretz and Lavi investigated the interaction between a specific, closed, community, the Kibbutz, and the

curriculum of its schools, in one country, Israel.

We did not include in this paper an analysis of a study viewing curriculum as an independent variable. The reason is that we do not believe that curriculum can ever be an independent variable. Teachers in classrooms will always change the curriculum they implement and transform it (Connelly 1972, Goodlad 1979). As Fullan puts it: "Situations vary, and we never fully know what implementation is or should be like until people in particular situations attempt to spell it out through use. Implementation makes further policy, it does not simply put predefined policy into practice." (Fullan, 1982 p. 79).

Research reports in the form of book, monograph or paper were analyzed using the categories mentioned above:

- context of inquiry
- definition of curriculum, basic assumptions and research questions
- methodology
- conclusion

The findings of these anaiyses were examined in order to find out:

1) what insights into the relationship between society and curriculum could be gained?
2) what are the possible relationships between adoption of frameworks for curriculum research and the practice of curriculum?

Analysis of Research Projects

The analysis of each research project will be presented and discussed separately. Then a discussion of the findings and their implications will be offered.

Analysis of the Beauchamp and Beauchamp study:

Context of inquiry:

Curriculum engineering practices and characteristics of curriculum design were investigated in three countries: England, France and Italy. These countries were chosen because they were considered as representing different modes of curriculum control. England was chosen because there was no national control over curriculum affairs, France was chosen because of its strong national control over curriculum decision making, and Italy was considered to exemplify moderate national control over the curriculum.

Definition of curriculum, basic assumptions and research questions:

Curriculum is defined as a written document intended to be used in school as the point of departure for teaching. A distinction is made between the planning process and the external influences exerted on this process. The basic and crucial curriculum question is assumed to be "what shall be taught in schools?" Curriculum engineering refers to the operations necessary for planning, implementing and evaluating the curriculum, which is basically an answer to this curricular question. The content and form of the curriculum are defined as curriculum design. The research questions focused on curriculum design and curriculum engineering. The arena for curriculum planning, involvement of people in the planning, procedures for planning, implementing and evaluating the curriculum

were investigated. The question of curriculum design was limited to the form and detail of the output of the planning process. The basic assumption was that curriculum engineering is a top down managerial endeavour (O'Hanlon 1973/4) which starts at a certain point outside the classroom and produces the blueprint for classroom action in the form of a curriculum document. Characteristics of the curriculum development process are deemed important and are viewed as dependent on social factors. The building of curriculum theory is at the core of this study. In Beauchamp's words: "From the conclusions of this study, a few statements can be made more positively than before the study was conducted... It is hoped that these postulates will be used to create deductions and hypotheses for experimental and field studies to test them more vigorously and to expand their meanings." (Beauchamp and Beauchamp 1967, p. 80).

Methodology: The methodology reflects the basic assumptions of this study. In each country the Ministry of Education was the starting point, then subordinate or regional offices were attended to,and finally contact was made with a sample of schools in order to determine what curriculum decisions were made, what implementation procedures were used and what kind of evaluation was carried out. Implementation and evaluation strategies were perceived mainly as pertaining to curricular decisions made at higher administrative levels.

Conclusions: The Beauchamps concluded that "curriculum is a very real concern in spite of different social and cultural systems of which the schools are a part" (Beauchamps, 1967, p. 66). Moreover,

the Beauchamps state that "a curriculum engineering system appears to be a necessary component of institutionalized schooling" (ibid., p. 68). Every society has to decide, and plan according to the Beauchamps, what shall be taught in schools. Curriculum thus becomes the sole concern of polity and professionals, and is not the legitimate concern of "consumers" - parents or learners. It was found in the study that England differs from France and Italy in the issue of authority for curriculum affairs. France and Italy have chosen to keep authority for curriculum engineering, particularly curriculum planning, at the national arena level in the hands of administrators, while implementation is at individual school level. At the opposite extreme is England, where curricular decisions are made at the individual school level, though England too has a centralized authority for education. The Beauchamps believe that historically the arena question has been settled on the basis of tradition and beliefs about the proper locus of curricular authority. There is a long tradition in England for reserving curriculum engineering activities for individual schools. Still, in Beauchamp's words "Evidence can be seen that the wisdom of this choice is being challenged by curriculum efforts in the national and regional arenas." (ibid., p. 69). The Beauchamps analyze the implications of these decisions on involvement of people. In France and Italy professional people in the schools are not involved in curriculum planning processes, because the functions of planning and direction of implementation, are in the hands of central government officials. The English system makes it possible for school personnel to be directly involved in planning decisions.

It is interesting to note that even in England the central authorities exert strong influences on the curriculum of individual schools through external examinations and through Her Majesty's Inspectors "who constitute an influence of major magnitude on the curriculums of the various schools." (ibid., p. 18). The Beauchamps believe that in view of recent developments in the British educational system, such as the foundation of the Schools Council in 1964, the curricular activities of the Nuffield Foundation and the creation of Regional Development Centres, it seems that "there is some justification for wondering if the long maintained individualism of the school unit for curriculum and instruction decision making, is, in fact, being challenged." (ibid., p. 24).

The Beauchamps themselves seem to be torn between an axiomatic bias that curriculum, instruction and evaluation are all functions of schooling and that decisions about them should be made at the level of schooling, and between an equally strong commitment to the managerial process of "curriculum engineering," including external responsibility for planning and issuing directives for implementation. It is taken for granted that curriculum planners must select curricular content on the basis of the needs of the society, for schools as social institutions. Thus, an important purpose of curriculum planning is a quest for uniformity of curriculum content for schools.

Summing up the analysis of this research project, one may claim that the relationship between society and the curriculum is perceived mainly in terms of conserving and transmitting culture from generation to generation. Curriculum is viewed, mainly, as

serving societal goals that are set by central social agencies, such as Ministries of Education. The model adopted is one in which schools are presented as the reflection of the wider society, responding to the demands of its social structure and economy. (Young and Whitty 1977). Certain questions are not asked in the context of this research. An example of such a question is: Is knowledge, as transmitted through school curricula, distributed differentially on the basis of social class? Such a question raises different issues than those dealt with by the Beauchamps. It is asked in the context of a relationship between society and curriculum which views education as reflecting class conflict in the area of distribution of knowledge. Rather than asking how knowledge is transmitted from one generation to the next, the question becomes: where lies the power that enforces one view of knowledge and curriculum rather than another and how are these differences expressed in classroom curriculum use. The Anyon (1981) research project is an example of this approach.

Analysis of the Anyon study:

Context of Inquiry

A case study of five elementary schools in contrasting social settings in New Jersey, U.S.A., was conducted. For the purpose of the study social class was defined by a series of relationships to aspects of the process by which society produces goods, services and culture. Data on the nature and distribution of school knowledge were gathered in an investigation of curriculum, pedagogy and pupil evaluation practices.

Definition of curriculum, basic assumptions and research questions:

Curriculum was defined as the embodiment in textbooks and instructional learning materials of curricular decisions about goals, content, scope and learning strategies. A distinction was made between the curriculum, in the form of texts, and the curriculum-in-use, namely, the manner in which these texts were used by teachers in classroom learning activities. The basic assumption of the study is that "students of different social class backgrounds are still likely to be exposed to qualitatively different types of educational knowledge." (Anyon, 1981, p. 3). In other words, social stratification of knowledge (Young 1971) is possible even under conditions of uniform state requirements and pronounced similarities in the adoption of textbooks and instructional materials. The differences in knowledge transmitted in schools, representing social class distinctions, are considered to have profound implications for social change. A distinction is made between "reproductive" and "nonreproductive" aspects of knowledge. 'Reproductive' refers to aspects of school knowledge "that contribute directly to the legitimation and perpetuation of ideologies, practices and privileges constitutive of present economic and political structures." (ibid., p. 51). "Nonreproductive" knowledge is "that which facilitates fundamental transformation of ideologies and practices on the basis of which objects, services and ideas... are produced, owned, distributed, and publicly evaluated." (ibid., p. 32). Searching for signs of transformative possibilities and activities in schools leads Anyon to focus on contradictions within and between social settings. An important

assumption of the study in that the outcome of class conflict in education is not yet determined, so that "for those of us who are working to transform society, there is much to do, at all levels, in education." (ibid., p. 39).

The main questions of the study were:

- what are the characteristics of each school (environment, staff, background of pupils, etc.)
- how is school knowledge perceived by teachers and pupils
- what are the characteristics of the curriculum
- how is the curriculum used

Methodology

The research was mainly ethnographic, the methods were classroom observations, formal and informal interviews of students, teachers, principals and district administrative staff. Textbooks and instructional materials were analyzed.

Conclusions

Anyon found profound differences in the curriculum and curriculum-in-use in her sample of schools, despite similarities in curriculum topics and materials. "What counts as knowledge in the schools differs along dimensions of structure and content." (ibid., p. 31). For instance, teachers in working class schools spoke of knowledge in terms of facts and simple skills. Although all schools used the same math text, pupils in this school were rarely given the opportunity to employ mathematical reasoning, they

were mostly restricted to procedures of basic skills. During discussion of school knowledge not a single child in either working class school used the term "thinking," they spoke of behaviors or skills, and did not consider themselves capable of "making knowledge." The dominant "theme" in the working class school was defined by Anyon as "resistance," both active and passive. In the executive elite school or the affluent professional school knowledge was considered conceptual, open to discovery and personal meaning. Pupils were engaged in active problem solving. Interestingly social studies knowledge in the executive elite school involved explicit recognition of social class in ancient history, discussions were sometimes critical. Pupils defined the nature of knowledge in terms of thinking and understanding. Most children in the affluent professional school, and about half of the children in the executive elite school perceived themselves as capable of producing knowledge. The dominant "theme" in the professional school was defined as "narcissism," and the dominant theme in the executive school was defined as "excellence." Anyon found evidences of "reproductive" aspects of school knowledge in all social class levels. Thus, knowledge transmitted by schools tends to sustain the status quo of the class structure of society. Yet, in all schools she also identified expressions of contradictions, of potentially nonreproductive aspects of school knowledge as presented to pupils. Anyon does not ask questions about the relationship between curriculum planning processes and the nature of curriculum implementation. For instance, participation of the community, such as parents, in the planning process could, conceivably, strengthen nonreproductive elements in the curriculum.

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Questions about the interaction between a community and the curriculum of its school were asked in the Ben-Peretz and Lavi investigation of the curriculum of Kibbutz schools.

Analysis of the Ben-Peretz and Lavi study:

Context of inquiry

The curriculum of Junior and Senior High Schools of three Kibbutz movements were investigated. A stratified sample of schools according to Kibbutz movement (ideological affiliation), location and size was included in the research population. The interrelationship between the Kibbutz community and its educational system is unique. The explicit goals of education stem from the needs of the immediate social and cultural environment. Most teachers are members of the Kibbutz and view themselves as its representatives in their educational role. Students are directly and intimately involved in the daily life and work of their community up to 10 weekly hours. Interpersonal relations in school are influenced by those in the community at large.

Definition of curriculum, basic assumptions and research questions

Curriculum is defined in this study in its widest meaning as all the experiences learners have under the guidance of schools. The curriculum is conceived as consisting of four elements: a program of studies; a program of experiences; a program of services and the hidden curriculum (Oliver 1977). All these elements were treated in the study. The program of studies was expressed in the school syllabus and in textbooks and instructional materials used in schools. The program of experiences includes learning experiences

in class but also parts of the daily schedule of Kibbutz children, such as participation in the daily workload of the Kibbutz, which are conceived as components of the total educational experience. The program of services includes a variety of educational services which are at the disposal of teachers and students, such as the work of the "Metapelet", or participation of parents in learning activities at school. The hidden curriculum of the Kibbutz relates to important social issues, such as the informal and cooperative relationship between teachers and students. The ideology of the Kibbutz and its unique lifestyle served as sources for the conceptual framework guiding the study and determined the research questions. Thus, this study adopted an "internal" frame of reference derived from the particular characteristics of the Kibbutz society, as opposed to "external" frames of reference adopted by Beauchamps and Anyon, who used theoretical frameworks not directly derived from the specific context of their inquiry. Some of the relevant Kibbutz characteristics are:

(1) the cooperative nature of Kibbutz life as opposed to the individualistic structure of life outside the Kibbutz.

(2) the close relationship between Kibbutz community and the Kibbutz school.

(3) the long-time influence of progressive ideas on Kibbutz education.

(4) the rich existing documentation accompanying the development of Kibbutz education.

A basic assumption of the study was that Kibbutz education at present time gives rise to specific dilemmas. These dilemmas served as foci for the investigation. Among them were the dilemma between

the principle of non-selectivity and the need to introduce Matriculation examinations into the educational system. Another dilemma pertains to the balance between externally planned curricula and the autonomous Kibbutz curricula.

The main research questions were: - what is the contribution of the unique social environment to the Kibbutz curriculum?
- does the Kibbutz curriculum emphasize local contexts of knowledge? - which strategies and methods of instruction and evaluation characterize the Kibbuts curriculum?
- how do the demands of the educational establishment outside the Kibbutz influence its curriculum? - who are the agents of decision making in the curriculum endeavor?
- what role do teachers play in the curriculum?
- what is the involvement of Kibbutz members on the curriculum?
- what changes can be identified in the Kibbutz curriculum over the years?
- how do changes in the curriculum influence the development of Kibbutz society, in view of the fact that students become Kibbutz members?

Methodology

The principals and a sample of 152 teachers of 28 Kibbutz High Schools were included in the research population. Teachers' and principals' questionnaires were used, as well as interviews and classroom observation. Content analysis of textbooks and educational documents were carried out.

Conclusions

On the whole the content of the Kibbutz curriculum is not different from the content of the curriculum of other schools in Israel. Ideological influences are reflected in the inclusion of topics bearing relevance to Kibbutz society. Increasingly the Kibbutz school adopts "externally" planned curricula, partly because of the introduction of Matriculation examinations. Instructional strategies have become more traditional, with less emphasis on progressive modes such as "project" and "process" teaching. Still, the principle of non-selectivity is preserved, classes are usually heterogeneous and all students learn in school up to the end of the 12th grade. Teachers consider themselves as active partners in the curriculum endeavor. The Kibbutz community, parents, and members who are not parents of school children, are involved in decision making processes related to the Kibbutz school curriculum. For instance, introduction of Matriculation examinations into the school system is decided on by the community. This involvement is institutionalized through the Education Committee and the General Assembly of the Kibbutz.To some extent Kibbutz members are also involved in the actual implementation processes of the curriculum. Classroom observation showed that relations between teachers and students are, in fact, cooperative and that the class climate is not formal. The Kibbutz school still reflects the interpersonal relationships of the Kibbutz society.

It seems that the curriculum of the Kibbutz school, especially the elements of experience, services and the hidden curriculum, are still strongly shaped by the Kibbutz community. On the other hand, the curriculum of the Kibbutz school influences the community. For

instance, introduction of Matriculation examinations leads to a growing number of young Kibbutz members who complete University studies. This phenomenon in turn leads to a change in the work styles of the Kibbutz and its economic structure.

Discussion

From the analysis of the three research projects, reported on in this paper, one may conclude that in different societies and cultures the curriculum of the school serves a major function of social control which may lead to the conservation of the status quo in society. This finding, while not new, still needs to be emphasized. The controlling function may be more or less deliberate. National control of curriculum engineering in Italy or France may be viewed as a deliberate attempt to guide education from the top down, and to ensure a certain uniformity in the curriculum. Even in England there is evidence that national control on curriculum is exerted, through external examinations and governmental inspectors. In the case of curriculum-in-use in the elementary schools studied by Anyon, the reproductive function is more hidden and may not be deliberate. The Kibbutz curriculum is deliberately and explicitly intended by the community to be a tool in conservation of the unique social structure of the Kibbutz.

In spite of the above conclusion, the researchers in the three studies were aware to the potential for social change which is inherent in the educational situations investigated by them. This awareness expresses itself in the research questions and in the conclusions. The Beauchamps sought for evidence that curriculum

engineering practices change over time and interpret their existence partly in historical terms. Anyon was highly conscious of inherent contradictions between reproductive and non-reproductive aspects of the curriculum-in-use in all schools whatever the social class level. These contradictions are potential gates for social changes. Ben-Peretz and Lavi found that the curriculum of the Kibbutz school, in spite of its avowed goal to ensure the continuous existence of the social structure and culture of the Kibbutz, tries to accept changes, emphasizing the individual growth and self-actualization of Kibbutz members. This too may be viewed as a contradiction between reproductive and non-reproductive aspects of the curriculum of the Kibbutz school.

The social aspects of the curriculum enterprise are sometimes neglected. Curriculum literature emphasizes issues related to the nature of subject matter being taught, or to aspects of individual psychology of learners or teachers. It seems to us that the social content of curriculum development and implementation has far-reaching implications for understanding curriculum phenomena. Curriculum research would profit from adopting comprehensive frames of reference with appropriate emphasis given to the issue of the relationships between society and curriculum.

Frames of reference of curricular research yield answers that are limited to the boundaries of the initial framework guiding the research. These answers and conclusions may influence and shape the practice of curriculum. Thus, curriculum research focusing on curriculum engineering processes may serve as the basis for decision making, which in turn will be in the realm of curriculum engineering. Other, important, aspects of the relationship between

society and curriculum may be neglected in practice, such as some of the basic questions proposed by Anyon.

The danger may be that perception of curriculum reality, or limitations of curriculum theory, may lead to the adoption of a certain conceptual framework for research, which in turn shapes curriculum reality, neglecting other important aspects of the curriculum enterprise. Thus, a circle of events is created which limits our understanding of curricular phenomena, and is counterproductive to curriculum change and the improvement of schooling.

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